



DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL

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MEMO PERD #05/03

January 24, 2003

TO: Department Directors
Division Administrators

FROM: Jeanne Greene, Director
Department of Personnel

SUBJECT: Department of Personnel's 2002 Legislative Audit

As a result of a 2002 Legislative Counsel Bureau audit, the Department of Personnel is currently implementing policy changes which may have a significant impact on the agencies we serve. The audit report focused on recommendations intended to ensure the State's financial management positions, responsible for billions of dollars received in taxes, fees and federal grants, are filled with highly qualified employees. This includes the State's Administrative Services Officers, Budget Analysts, Management Analysts, Accountants and Accountant Technicians. The audit's scope covered similar issues as one conducted in 1996, which also evaluated the processes by which financial managers in the classified service are recruited, hired and promoted.

While acknowledging the Department of Personnel had made improvements as a result of the 1996 audit, the 2002 audit report emphasized the need for competition during recruitment for financial managers as a critical factor in ensuring the State hires the most qualified individuals available. The report concluded that many promotional recruitments may result in little or no competition and may provide no assurance agencies are getting the best qualified financial manager available. In contrast, open competitive recruitments are more likely to attract larger numbers of qualified applicants. Thus, when recruiting for financial managers, agencies are encouraged to seek applicants through open competition, with the goal of attaining a list of five or more qualified candidates from which to select. To assist agencies in this objective, when promotional-only lists contain five or fewer candidates, the Department of Personnel will certify an additional open competitive list. If the agency chooses not to hire from the open competitive list, the agency will indicate that it has considered the use of the open competitive list but has elected not to use it. Current open competitive lists for these classes will be available by the end of this month.

The audit report also discussed instances in which employees were improperly transferred to higher paying positions at grade 30 and above without competition in violation of regulation. The recommendation was for closer scrutiny both by the agencies and the Department of Personnel. We will be providing training to agency personnel liaisons on the pertinent regulations and adding an edit function to the automated Integrated Financial System-Human Resources for these appointments, which will require staff scrutiny and follow-up with the agencies.

The Department of Personnel's efforts to attract business graduates into the State's financial management workforce were viewed as only marginally successful in the audit report, although the State's limited ability to offer paid student internships was agreed to be a difficult hurdle. The audit recommendations asked for additional efforts in this area. As a result we are in the process of establishing a new classification of Fiscal/Business Professional Trainee, grade 31. Applicants with a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in business or public administration, accounting, finance or similar discipline directly related to fiscal or business management may be placed on an unranked hiring list. This will facilitate the employment of trainees in fiscal management class series such as Budget Analyst, Management Analyst, Grants and Project Analyst and other series directly related to the management of the State's resources.

We are also working with the Career Service Centers of the University of Nevada, Reno and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to implement strategies that will best inform students of the opportunities and benefits of State careers in financial management positions. Examinations will be administered on campus for student applicants and letters will be sent to upcoming graduates in fields related to financial management inviting them to participate. As a portion of this effort, we are interested in identifying alumni of these campuses who are currently working in State financial management positions in order to solicit their assistance to speak to students regarding their experiences. Please contact Mary Ellen Komac in our Carson City office at 775-684-0103, or Greg Febbo in Las Vegas at 702-486-2902, if you have staff members who would be willing to assist in this way.

In closing, the recommendations in the audit report will not only affect the State's financial managers, but many other employees as well. I would appreciate your dissemination of this information to your division chiefs, personnel staff, and other staff as you think appropriate. My staff and I are available to provide any assistance and clarification you may need in implementing these changes. Please feel free to contact our offices if you have questions.

JG:sq

cc: Agency Personnel Liaisons
Agency Personnel Representatives